THE

THESPIAN MONITOR,

AND

DRAMATICK MISCELLANY.

BY BARNABY BANGBAR, ESQ.

Careless of censure—nor too fond of fame,
Still pleas'd to praise—yet not afraid to blame,
Averse, alike, to flatter or offend. POPE.

Vol. I.....SATURDAY, Dec. 16, 1809.....No. IV.

NEW-THEATRE.

FRIDAY, Dec. 8th.

MOUNTAINEERS.

G. Colman, Jun.

Don Octavian,	Master Payne.
Bulcazim Muley,	Mr. M'Kenzie.
Count Virolet,	Master Barrett.
Killmalloch,	Mr. Cross.
Roque,	Mr. Warren.
Sadi,	Mr. Jefferson.
Zoraidi,	Mrs. Seymour.
Floranthe,	Mrs. Wood.
Agnes,	Mrs. Wilmot.

When the vivacity and satirick sprightliness of comedy, are blended in the same dramatick composition with the encreasing interest and terrour of tragedy; when easy gaiety and playful mirth are introduced as the preceding or

succeeding dialogue, to sympathetick and heart rending action ; we are at a loss under what appellation to recognise the exhibition. The legitimacy of the offspring is questioned of the authour; consistency and probability are banished from the groundwork of the tale, and men of science, of judgment, and of taste, will ever struggle to discard, as they have united to condemn the inelegance, and impropriety of such dramatick innovation. Tragedy has long been considered as a dignified entertainment, a noble species of poetry, and a faithful representation of the severe sufferings, and deep distresses, as well as of the enormous crimes of mankind. Comedy has for its object the ridicule of fashionable foible, and truly exhibits the follies and slighter vices of the heedless and unthinking. As therefore the subject of these different branches of the drama, are unlike each other, and as dignity and sublimity are not congenial with raillery and humour, the mingling of their different traits, and peculiarities is unquestionably injudicious, and renders that unnatural which might probably have been interesting and pleasing. The Play, for so it must be called, of the Mountaineers, is composed of too much contrariety of character, and partakes of too great a portion of the unpardonable mixture to which we have already given our disapprobation. Such an heterogeneous mass of laughter provoking phrase, and pathetic incident, could never have been sanctioned, even from the pen of Colman, had he not devoted his attention to such language as was appropriate to *Octavian* to utter, and was suited to the exquisite sensibility of the unhappy wanderer, and as ranks, with

the finest effusions of any other of the poetick dramatists. The situations of *Octavian* are interesting, and productive of the warmest sympathy; the commendable fidelity of *Floranthe* such as excites our admiration and provokes applause. The plot of the Mountaineers is known to have been taken from the Romance of Miguel, or Michael Cervantes, recognized under the title of *Don Quixotte De la Mancha*. Two episodes are contained in the different volumes of that Romance, which have furnished the plot and under plot of this three act play. The first is the tale of *Cardenio* and *Lucinda*, whom we see represented by *Octavian* and *Floranthe*. The second is *Zoraidi* and her father, whose names are preserved with a little variation in their orthography. The musick which embellishes the songs, and is the accompanying entertainment to the scenery, is of the richest and most elegant production which has hitherto graced a dramatick exhibition. The notes are peculiarly sweet, and the melodious sounds of *Sadi's* duets with *Agnes*, by their pleasing effects, form another apology for the medley of the incidents.

The infuriate and phrenetick disposition of *Octavian*, after his flight from his native city, and from the scene of *Floranthe's* supposed perfidy, whilst it seizes upon the feelings of humanity, and carries away the judgment from the view of any imperfection, requires the strongest bursts of passion from the actor, and the coolest and most deliberate attention to the variations of insanity. Master Payne gave it whatever it could require. The elegance of his attitude, the pro-
ty of his movement, the grace and firmne-

gesture, and the whole of the *business*, before the mouth of the cave, at the first entrance, was differently executed from the manner in which we have been accustomed to witness it, and as superiour to every other, as it was unlike them. The encountering of *Sadi* and *Agnes*, furnished us with sufficient evidence of master Payne's powers, and capacity to feel; and the other scenes of a similar nature, between him and *Roque* and *Bulcazim Muley*, confirmed that evidence beyond dispute. The words—

> " If the road to one poor Ducat, were paved with youthful hearts, sprinkle grey hairs upon a fellow's pate, he'll trample o'er them all, to catch it,"

were " well spoken; with good accent, and good discretion," as says my lord *Polonius*. The part of *Octavian* is not long enough to be tedious, nor too short to be pleasing: it is happily blended with fine feeling, and excessive interest, and we think that master Payne's success in its delineation, exceeds what he has yet had in any other.

Bulcazim Muley was not so harmonious in his tones, as we could have wished. Nor was his occasional violent exclamation so agreeable to the ear, as a more regular cadence would have been.

Count Virolet gave another occasion for the appearance of master Barrett. To deal with the severity which is sometimes required, is irksome to us, and we have forborne to speak of master Barrett as our judgment dictated.—We are acquainted with the cause of his appearing in the

characters belonging to another gentleman, and though we cannot but applaud that gentleman's generosity, as well as the Manager's good motive, yet we cannot but regret its injurious effects upon the gratification of the audience.

Killmalloch laboured under an indisposition. Mr. Cross might have suffered that consideration to withdraw him from the character. We are content to see Mr. Cross in Irish business, when his voice admits it. This night we were sensible of the misfortune of the possibility of an actor's retaining a part, merely because he has the right of possession, nor do we know, why the character in another play, represented this week, in the *cast* of it, should be almost reversed, and Mr. Hardinge, the original *Killmalloch*, detained from his appearance in this drama.

Roque has again reverted to Mr. Warren, and from the difference of representation, which we see so plainly between this, and the *Roque* of last season, we are assured of the superiority of the present one.

Mr. Jefferson's *Sadi* was universally admired and applauded. The musick of the piece, he is perfectly acquainted with, and his manner of delivering the duet's, in conjunction with the sweetness of Mrs. Wilmot's notes in *Agnes*, communicated the highest gratification and delight. Few theatres can boast of such a *Sadi*, or of such an *Agnes*.

Zoraidi and *Floranthe* fell each into entire new hands. Mrs. Jefferson was the *Zoraidi* of the last representation, and would have been of the present, but for her indispostion. Mrs. Seymour was not equal to her predecessour.

Floranthe formerly belonged to Mrs. Francis. In this change we were amply compensated for our loss in the other. Mrs. Wood can never do injustice to any character.

The representation of the whole play could not but have pleased the many. The authour's beauties were exhibited to great advantage, and the most obscure among them made evident indeed.—To a dramatick attempt which has foiled criticism so long, we shall not now offer any kind of severity; though we cannot sanction the vile practice of railing against age. *Octavian's* whole business is to ridicule what has hitherto in every drama, been scrupulously respected. The design of stage representation should be to promote virtue, not to violate the duty of a youth, to "reverend grey hairs."

RAISING THE WIND.

James Kenny.

Plainway,	Mr. Francis.
Fainwould,	Mr. Briers.
Didler,	Mr. Jefferson.
Sam,	Mr. Wilmot.
Miss Plainway,	Mrs. Seymour.
Miss Laurelia Durable,	Mrs. Francis.

Raising the Wind is a very humourous afterpiece, and is generally attended with a cheerful reception. *Mr. Plainway*, an old gentleman of the country, father to *Miss Plainway*, and brother to *Miss Durable*, was personated by Mr. Francis with the usual degree of spirit which he gives to old men.

Fainwould was modestly represented, and received all that "respect" which his authour makes him so anxious to obtain.

Didler has been attempted by many celebrated comedians, but by none so successfully as by Mr. Jefferson, who exhibits the various dispositions of *Jeremy* with admirable effect.

Sam, a cunning Yorkshireman of the Inn, was represented by Mr. Wilmot. The dialect he seems to understand as well as the gesture; and were he to modulate his voice more, and not to suffer it to rise so far above its proper key, he would augment the pleasure which his representation of such characters has already excited.

Miss Plainway's singing was all that entitled her to appear, and that might be improved by a little variation of the tone.

Miss Laurelia Durable can never receive a superiour representation from any other person. In the character of an old maid lies the forte of Mrs. Francis, and shows her to great advantage.

Saturday, Dec. 9th.

LOVERS' VOWS.

(Kotzebue.) Translated by Mrs. Inchbald.

Baron Wildenheim,	Mr. M'Kenzie.
Count Cassel,	Mr. Jefferson.
Anhalt,	Mr. Wood.
Verdun,	Mr. Francis.
Frederick,	Master Payne.
Agatha,	Mrs. Barrett.
Amelia,	Mrs. Wood.

The fable of this play has been said by a celebrated critick, to be injudicious, the translation

paltry, and the original itself flimsey. Although we do not entirely subscribe to this opinion, yet we think it should long ago have been banished from the stage. The tendency is immoral. *Count Cassel's* dissipated villainies should be punished, and the looseness and indifference of his phraseology entirely discarded. The other characters are drawn to interest the feelings, and such is the situation of the *dramatis personæ*, that an actor can hardly fail of rousing them, be his delineation as unworthy as it may.

Baron Wildenheim which formerly was personated by Mr. Warren, is now attached to the possessions of Mr. M'Kenzie. The *Baron* was perfect, and not badly uttered.

Anhalt was reverend indeed. Mr. Wood's new dress is perfectly characteristick of a German Pastor. We never saw a costume more appropriate.

Verdun's voice ought not to have been so much broken. Mr. Francis might have repeated his poetry without offending every ear with discord.

Although we beheld Master Payne with admiration, yet he did not so much delight us in *Frederick*, as in the other characters which he personated. The scenes with *Anhalt*, *Baron Wildenheim*, *Amelia* and his *Mother*, were such as from their nature must have excited interest in the most insensible bosom, and even had they been indifferently repeated, must have created sympathy. The principal scenes were too cold. Master Payne should have let out a little in the begining of the interview with *Wildenheim*, and not have been so boisterous in the close of it.

Mrs. Wood's *Amelia* was very pretty, simple, neat, and unaffected. Her dialogue with *Anhalt* extremely innocent and diverting, and her communication to her father, excessively confidential.

Mrs. Barrett's *Agatha* was rather too laboured.

ROSINA.

Mrs. Brooks.

Belville,	Mr. Hardinge.
Captain Belville	Mr. Cross.
William,	Mr. Francis.
Rosina,	Mrs. Wilmot.
Phœbe,	Mrs. Seymour.
Dorcas,	Mrs. Morris.

Rosina is a comick opera with few recitative words and overwhelmed with songs. It has been said to be the production of an elegant mind. The songs persuade us so. Thomson's *Palemon* and *Lavinia* supplied the principal plot, *Dorcas* serving as the old mother of *Lavinia*. The little tale of *William* and *Phœbe* is from Horace's ninth ode of book third.

Mr. Hardinge's apparel was perfectly genteel, and his singing extremely melodious. Mr. Cross's *Captain Belville* did not excite much attention.

Mrs. Wilmot's *Rosina* was very enchanting. She sings with grace, and excellence, and creates a lively interest in every part she undertakes.

Mrs. Seymour's *Phœbe* was very prettily personated, and *Dorcas* by Mrs. Morris was not only productive of the highest admiration, but of equal astonishment.

Monday, Dec. 11th.

MAHOMET,—THE IMPOSTOR.

Rev. J. Miller.

Through an unlooked for, and unexpected event we were prevented from attending at the theatre as early as we otherwise should have done. We were early enough however to hear Mr. Downie, in the character of *Mirvan*, wish "that his enmity might be *dis*-tinguished." Would Mr. Downie could distinguish himself for more attention to his part.

As much of *Zaphna* as we saw, we could not applaud, with half the vigour, that the multitude seemed ready for. But we forbear to examine the performance critically, as we did not see the whole representation.

SPOILED CHILD.

Anonymous.

Old Pickle,	Mr. West.
Little Pickle,	Mrs. Wilmot.
John,	Mr. Wilmot.
Miss Pickle,	Mrs. Francis.

Mr. West's old men are truly admirable. His manner is very appropriate to such characters, and his dress and gesture, perfectly characteristick.

Little Pickle cannot be sufficiently extolled. Mrs. Wilmot's figure is admirably calculated for the male apparel, and in the character of *Little Pickle* in its *tout ensemble* she never can be exceeded.

Mr. Wilmot's *John* was very properly delivered.

Mrs. Francis is such a *Miss Pickle* as would be an acquisition to any theatre. Her manner of personating old maids is perfectly original.

Wednesday, Dec. 13th.

HAMLET,

Prince of Denmark.

Shakspeare.

Hamlet,	Master Payne.
Claudius,	Mr. Warren.
Polonius,	Mr. Jefferson.
Laertes,	Mr. Cone.
Horatio,	Mr. Hardinge.
Ghost,	Mr. M'Kenzie.
Osrick,	Mr. Downie.
Guildenstern,	Mr. Harris.
Rosencrantz,	Master Barrett.
Gertrude,	Mrs. Barrett.
Ophelia,	Mrs. Wilmot.

Of the character, disposition, and representation of *Hamlet*, so much has already been said in the different periodical publications of the day, that it would be almost superfluous in us to offer one remark. We hope to see this excellent play again repeated, and what mention we now omit, we shall take advantage of hereafter. No actor who ever attempted to personate *Hamlet*, has been estimated as entirely faultless in his representation. From the modesty of demeanour, which we have heard characterises master Payne, we are persuaded he will not reject cor-

rection in a character which has been found to be the most difficult in all the drama. To the reading of *Hamlet*, as we heard it on Wednesday, we must take some exception. The articulation of the first line was not sufficiently audible for us to distinguish the pronunciation of the last word, though we think it was uttered *kyind*.

'A little more than kin, but less than kind."

Kint or kind is the only proper pronunciation. We are told by Dr. Johnson that these are words intended, in answer to "and now our cousin Hamlet and our son," to say "I am more than your cousin, but less than your son." The Teutones, or ancient Germans expressed son by the use of that word, and the Teutonick phrase being pronounced "*kint*" should be preserved at least in its sound. The omission of any lines intended by the authour to have been expressed, not omitted in the *cut* play, and such as if omitted destroy the connexion which ought to have been preserved, cannot meet with the smallest sanction. In the following passage it is unpardonable. The words in *italicks* only were repeated.

Seems, madam ? nay it is ; I know not seems.
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected 'haviour of the visage
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly.

Lacies, p. 67-72.

again,

The time is out of joint. O cursed spight,
That ever I was born to set it right.

False reading, arising through improper emphasis, should never be encouraged, and is deserving of censure. On Wednesday we heard

Hor.
The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.
Ham.
Sir, my good friend, I'll change that name with *you*.

The word "*that*" is the emphatick word, though the last word "*you*" was made so. *Hamlet* certainly meant, sir, do not call yourself my servant, but my friend; *that* is the name I'll change with you, and not "I'll change that name with *you*, and with no other, as we are here taught to believe.

In the line we have already quoted,

Seems, madam, nay it is; I know not seems,

I claims the emphasis, and not *know*, as master Payne made it, meaning *I* am not acquainted with the habit of seeming, but am sorrowful in reality. Whereas if we suffer *know* to be marked, *Hamlet's* words will be contradictory, because he immediately after says,

"These indeed seem:"

consequently he does know what seems dignified, though he practises it not.

My fate cries out
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve,

These words were delivered too loudly to be pleasing. *Nemean* should be emphatick, and not Nem, and the accent placed upon the first syllable of the word, not upon the second.

Concerning the following passage, there has, perhaps, been too much disputation. The true manner of reading it, has been however established. We have heard it somewhere urged, that it should be thus delivered,

————Nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king, *that* was, to *this*.
Hyperion to a Satyr.

with this only reason to support its probability, *Hamlet*, say they, means that his father was so excellent a king, compared to this. That king was, to this king.—But this we think would be unlike the language which *Hamlet* is wont to direct to his deceased father; and his being *only* excellent when put in contrast with his brother, is by no means complimentary to the remembrance of him he speaks of. The mode of pronouncing these words can be only thus,

————Nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that *was* to *this*,
Hyperion to a Satyr.

Which were perfectly full. "So excellent a king;" stands well understood; and his being,

when compared to this, "Hyperion to a Satyr," is the strongest manner of impressing the hearer with a belief of the good qualities of *Hamlet's* father. Mr. Warburton very elegantly and ingeniously asserts one reason why this passage should be read, in the way we mention. By the Satyr, says the Bishop, is meant *Pan*, as by *Hyperion*, *Apollo*. *Pan* and *Apollo*, were brothers, and the allusion is, to the contention between those gods for the preference in musick. This similitude, Warburton himself acknowledges to be very far fetched, but he declares it to be an exquisite beauty. Master Payne read it not, in either way.—Thus he delivered it.

"So excellent a king, that *was* to *this*."

Meaning to say, so excellent a king, my father was, when spoken of, with mine uncle, but emphasising *was* instead of *that*, agreeably to his own reading; and commencing a new sentence with

"Hyperion to a Satyr."

The following exclamation to his mother, against the conduct of his uncle, we cannot pronounce to have been either properly delivered, or gratifying to the audience who heard it. The rapid succession with which each line followed the other, was such as to produce very painful sensations in the hearer, and difficult "suspiration of forc'd breath" in the actor. They were rendered entirely indistinct and incomprehensible.

A murderer and a villain :
A slave that is not twentieth part the tythe
Of your precedent lord :—a vice of kings :
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule ;
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket.

In pointing out these several omissions, and particular faults, we acknowledge to have been perhaps too strictly attentive to the severest rules of proper reading. Why we have sought out such trivial occurrences, as when questioned bear the name of pecadilloes, is because in the general performance of master Payne's *Hamlet*, we are sensible of not having seen any material imperfection which was deserving of of reproach. If, to the admirers of our little *Garrick's Hamlet*, these remarks shall not be pleasing ; nor admitted by them as judicious or correct ; the following description of his principal beauties will be more acceptable.

The most beautifully repeated passages which met our ear, were

Haste me to know it, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

and the following, which Master Payne read more judiciouly than any man upon this stage ever has read it, without exception.

There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark,——
——But, he's an arrant knave.

The repetition of the latter has seldom met with a proper delivery. *Hamlet*'s sudden change of intention to reveal to *Marcellus* and *Horatio*, what his father's ghost had told him, was never better exhibited than in the elegant and appropriate pause which followed the word "Denmark."

Claudius receives a very proper and judicious reading, from Mr. Warren. We should be pleased to hear the soliloquy restored, commencing with "Oh my offence is rank, &c.

Of Mr. Jefferson's *Polonius* we regret, that we cannot speak as we would wish. The continual and obstinate habit which he, and other actors have fallen into, of making *Polonius* little more than a buffoon, is deserving of the severest censure. Why do they so wish "to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh?" *Polonius* should be a gentleman in his behaviour; and "as levity is the soul of wit, and tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes, I will be brief" to say that Mr. Jefferson will never be listened to, with any degree of delight, unless he personates *Polonius*, like himself, a privy councellor to the king.

Laertes was very respectable; his voice grown better, than when last we heard him "bellow for revenge," and his dress extremely rich and elegant.

Horatio has been hitherto personated by Mr. Wood. This night its representative was Mr. Hardinge, who has discovered that *Horatio* was not "more an antique Roman, than a Dane!" but something nearer to an Irishman than either. The reply *Horatio* makes to *Bernardo's* demand,

should have been accompanied with an offer of his hand.

Ber. What, is Horatio there ?
Hor. A piece of him.

Meaning that the hand was a piece, or a part of himself. Intended in any other way, the reply is indecorous and vulgar, and not pardonable from the mouth of a gentleman, the immediate friend of *Hamlet*.

Mr. M'Kenzie's *Ghost* was repectably personated, and the words impressively delivered.

Guildenstern and *Rosencrantz* were cast to Mr. Harris and Master Barrett, we presume, to make the little *Hamlet* " greater look."

WEATHERCOCK.

I. T. Allingham.

Old Fickle,	Mr. Francis.
Tristram,	Mr. Jefferson,
Briefwit,	Mr. Blissett.
Sneer,	Mr. Wilmot.
Variella,	Mrs. Wilmot.
Ready,	Miss Petit.

Mr. Francis's *Old Fickle*, is very humourous. We never saw him create more laughter, his exertion was truly inimitable. Blisset's *Briefwit* was " good." Mr. Jefferson's *Tristram*, lively, active, and productive of real merriment. *Variella* was vivid in her motion, and very quick in the different changes of the dress. Her song was very well received.

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